DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 441 745 SO 031 804

AUTHOR Ogawa, Masato
TITLE Discovering Different Perspectives of World War II in Sixth-Grade Social Studies Classrooms.
PUB DATE 2000-04-24
NOTE 27p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 23-28, 2000).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Research; Content Analysis; Grade 6; Interviews; Middle School Students; Middle Schools; Modern History; *Oral History; *Social Studies; Student Research; *Textbook Content; *Thinking Skills; *World War Ii
IDENTIFIERS Cultural Framing; *Historical Explanation; Japan (Hiroshima); Japan (Nagasaki); Perspective Consciousness

ABSTRACT

A study recorded and analyzed instances of how middle school students develop their skills of historical thinking and perspective taking through the use of two methods: textbook analysis and oral history interviews. First, students analyzed textbook treatment of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in their U.S. and Japanese history textbooks. Then, they interviewed Japanese and Americans who had different historical perspectives about World War 2, with a special focus on the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Japan). Seven questions directed the study, among them: (1) Can students find different treatments of the historical event in Japanese and American textbooks? (2) How do students interact with oral history narrators with different historical perspectives? and (3) How do students analyze different perspectives of the historical event? Participants, two rural Georgia sixth-grade classes, completed a 3-week unit on World War 2, compared textbooks from Japan and the United States, discussed a hypothetical situation with Hiroshima as their community, and engaged in a sustained oral history interview experience. Data revealed that the majority of the students were able to find different treatments of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in U.S. and Japanese textbooks. Most students found that the U.S. textbook paid little attention to the historical event of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, devoted little space to the bombing, and exhibited a superficial perspective. The introduction of oral history activities helped almost all students to develop their historical thinking, general analysis, and critical thinking skills. (Contains 61 references. Appended are sample oral history questions and a data sheet.) (BT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 441 745

# Discovering Different Perspectives of World War II in Sixth-Grade Social Studies Classrooms

Masato Ogawa

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Masato Ogawa
621 Aderhold Hall
Department of Social Science Education
College of Education
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602
(706)542-4135
e-mail: mogawa@coe.uga.edu

SO 031 804

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association
New Orleans, Louisiana, April 24, 2000



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

**Discovering Different Perspectives of World War II**
**in Sixth-Grade Social Studies Classrooms**

## Introduction

Young students have traditionally characterized history as mundane, difficult, uninteresting, dry, and irrelevant to their present and future lives (Crocco, 1998; Levstik, 1986; Smith & Manly, 1994). Students often have difficulty understanding chronological archival details which become confused, conflated, and eventually forgotten (Crocco, 1998; Levstik, 1986; Smith & Manly, 1994; VanSledright, 1995). In this case, students see history as an isolated period of time and their connection to it is the memorization of facts and dates (Bohan & Davis, 1998; Johnson, 1998; Smith & Manly, 1994; VanSledright, 1995). Many reasons undoubtedly exist to explain this state of affairs. One reason is the lack of attention to personal connections. According to Crocco (1998), "personal lives and stories often get very little play in social studies [and history] courses." Levstik and Barton (1997) state that "For much of the 20th century, school history derived mainly from the political life of nations and emphasized the study of leaders. History instruction began with the assumption of a unified society, telling a broad story that tended to deemphasize racial, ethnic, gender, and class distinctions. As a result, many of us became invisible in history."

Many history education researchers point out that extensive textbook usage is one of the reasons why students often react negatively to learning history (e.g., Crocco, 1995; Downey & Levstik, 1991; Goodlad, 1984; Loewen, 1995). Additionally, researchers criticize the reliance on textbooks and textbook-based teaching in classrooms (e.g., Gagnon, 1988; Johnson, 1988; Levstik, 1986; Olsen, 1993; Wade, 1993). Wade (1993) concludes that social studies textbooks are biased, superficial, or poorly written. Olsen (1987) notes that textbooks only provide the sequencing of the dates, names, relationships, and causes of past events. Gagnon (1988) states that textbooks do not assist students in

obtaining the "judgment, perspectives, and knowledge of human and society" that are important to the study of history (Klages, 1999). According to Johnson (1988), dependence on textbook-based teaching methods and time constraints to deeply connect with a topic place students in a passive role.

Although the reliance on textbooks has received much criticism, in many classrooms, teachers tend to use the traditional approach of textbooks as "their major vehicle for instruction" (vonEschenbach & Ragsdale, 1989). The American Textbook Council indicates that teachers rely on a textbook for 70 to 90 percent of their social studies instruction (Cohen, 1995b). Teachers continue to use textbooks for the following reasons: curricular organization, instructional efficiency, personal habit, and survival in the face of daunting workloads (Crocco, 1998).

The National Center for History in the Schools (1996) supported important educational reform in U.S. schools in its suggested national history standards. These standards emphasized students' historical thinking skills, such as the ability to analyze and interpret historical data and to evaluate historical perspectives. In order to adequately develop students' historical thinking skills, students and teachers must go beyond textbooks (Klages, 1999; Wade, 1993) because, as Levstik (1986) points out, textbook-based teaching and learning practices are largely unsuccessful in developing students' historical understanding and perspective. What materials or instruction methods should be used in classrooms in order to develop students' historical thinking skills and to construct their historical perspectives?

Many educators and history education researchers suggest the use of various alternative methods other than textbook-based teaching of history in elementary and middle schools (e.g., Ellis, 1998; Hoge & Crump, 1988; Levstik & Barton, 1997; Michaelis & Garcia, 1996). For example, Wolf, Balick, and Craven (1997) recommend that middle school students learn the skills of an archaeologist. Hoge and Crump (1988) suggest alternatives for elementary students, such as the use of role plays, cooperative learning,

artifacts, children's literature, visual materials, field trips, and oral history. Other researchers recommend the use of literature and the arts (Epstein, 1994; Labbo & Field, 1995), of inquiry to investigate artifacts (Field, Labbo, Wilhelm, & Garrett, 1996; Jorgenson, 1993; Martinello & Cook, 1994), and of photographs (Foster, Hoge, & Roche, 1999; Levstik & Barton, 1996) in order to provide students with additional interpretive and analytical opportunities.

## Oral History Project as an Alternative Textbook-Based Approach

Among the alternative methods of teaching history, the use of oral history has been adopted by many social studies teachers because, according to Crocco (1998), "in periods of scarce resources, the use of oral history provides a means of including individual life stories without necessitating an investment in new classroom materials, and for teachers, the start-up costs are minimal." When students do an oral history project, they may become historians and develop oral skills, social skills, intellectual concepts, skills of empathy, intellectual skills, understanding of the problem and values of historical evidence, and ability to make records and narrative accounts of what had been found (Crocco, 1998; Ross, 1998). Using oral history in the classroom serves "to bridge the gap between curriculum and community; it brings history home by linking the world of textbook and classroom with the face-to-face social world of the student's home community" (Sitton, Mehaffy, & Davis, 1983).

From the standpoint of multicultural education, Banks and Banks (1995) suggest the introduction of oral history projects in diverse classrooms. Oral history projects can draw families and children together in the classroom, thereby introducing a multicultural dimension to class content (Boyle-Baise, 1996; Crocco, 1998, Tiedt & Tiedt, 1999). Style (1988) suggests that teachers in culturally diverse classrooms use oral history projects that allow students to make "textbooks of their lives," to provide reflections of themselves and others throughout the school curriculum (Crocco, 1998). Seixas' study (1993) revealed

that the oral history project by students in an urban, multiethnic Canadian high school was "not meant to transform their understanding of history, but to serve as a locus for students to demonstrate how they dealt with historical information that comes from the family."

For students who study in diverse classrooms and who live in multicultural communities, one important question that inevitably arises concerns whether they have had ample opportunities to examine the life experiences of those different from themselves. Thus, students can discover different and multiple perspectives about history by engaging in oral history projects. In a diverse society, it is a necessity that students learn how historical accounts have multiple perspectives (Bohan & Davis, 1998). Individual contributions are welcomed as part of a shared learning process (Bohan & Davis, 1998).

## Purpose

The purpose of this study was to record and analyze instances of how middle school students develop their skills at historical thinking and perspective taking through the use of two methods: textbook analysis and oral history interviews. First, students analyzed textbook treatment of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in their U.S. and Japanese history textbooks. Then, they interviewed Japanese and American persons who had different historical perspectives about World War II, with a special focus on the historical event of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the war. Seven questions directed this study; "Are students able to find different treatments of the historical event in Japanese and U.S. textbooks?"; "Can students find sufficient information from textbooks?"; "How do students interact with oral history narrators with different historical perspectives?"; "Can students discover different perspectives through oral history interviews with Japanese and American persons?"; " How do students analyze different perspectives of the historical event?"; "Which perspective do they support?"; and "How do students construct their own perspective of the historical event?"

There are several reasons why the historical event of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was selected for this study. First, a recent poll conducted by CNN (1999) showed that this historical event was picked as the most impressive historical story of the 20th century. However, little consensus exists on the rationale for the bombing or the subsequent effects, implications, and results of the employment of such weaponry, not only between Japan and the United States but also among historians (Bohan & Davis, 1998). Second, the event is well situated as one conducive to multiple perspectives. Thus, students can learn about varying perspectives and divergent interpretations of an event, and also can learn about the differences between supportable and insupportable claims (Levstik, 1997). Third, the topic has enormous relevance to contemporary issues including the justifiable and moral use of force, the presence of nuclear weapons, and concerns for the environment (Foster & Morris, 1994). Finally, the topic was selected because of my interest in the various perspectives surrounding the event, and the methods and materials used to read about it in the United States and in Japan, my home country. In a prior study, I found that the treatment of Japan's post-World War II events in the major history textbooks in use in the United States and Japan differs greatly (Ogawa, 1998).

## Procedures

The site of this study was a public middle school in rural Georgia with an enrollment of approximately 500 students drawn largely from a working class neighborhood. The sample selection was convenient based upon my professor's work in this school and her relationship with the classroom teacher. Participants in this study were a female social studies teacher with six years of teaching experience and her two social studies classes of sixth grade culturally diverse students (approximately 75% white; 25% African-American). Oral history narrators were two American World War II veterans and one Japanese graduate student, myself. The two American veterans were chosen from the

community and volunteered to speak about experiences during World War II and their perspectives of World War II and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I spoke about my perspective and how I learned about World War II and how my Japanese teachers taught about the atomic bombing of Hiroshima when I was a middle school student. I also spoke about my perspective of World War II and the historical significance of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki from the standpoint of a Japanese citizen.

In order to investigate how students discover different perspectives and how they build their own perspective through the use of oral history, data sources included observational field notes, transcripts of oral history interviews, interviews with the classroom teacher, and copies of students' work and reflections.

During the 3-week unit of the study, students learned about World War II through their textbook readings, classroom discussion, use of literature, and videos under the direction of their teacher. Students learned about the European Theater and the Pacific Theater of World War II for two weeks. Next, students and the teacher prepared 22 interview questions for me, the Japanese oral history narrator, and 16 questions for the World War II veterans (see appendices A and B). Toward the end of the unit, they embarked upon a group oral history study with the Japanese citizen and two U.S. World War II veterans.

To introduce multiple perceptions and bias or stereotypes that may arise from curriculum materials, students compared textbooks from the United States and Japan. They learned how Japanese middle school students study about World War II and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by using a translated Japanese textbook (Osaka Shoseki's *Chugaku Shakaika: Rekishiteki Bunnya*, 1991). The book, *Japan in Modern History*, published by the International Society for Educational Information in 1996, was useful for translating this Japanese textbook into English. Students compared the treatment of the atomic bombing on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the Japanese textbook and the U.S. textbook used in their class (Macmillan/McGraw-Hill's *The World: Past and*

*Present*, 1993). Key topics for comparison were (1) Creation of the atomic bomb: "Who made the atomic bomb?" "How was the atomic bomb tested?"; (2) America's motives and objectives in using the bomb: "Why did the United States drop the atomic bomb?"; (3) Soviet role: "What was the Soviet role in dropping the atomic bomb?"; (4) Dropping of atomic bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: "How do textbooks in the two countries treat the atomic bomb?"; and (5) Aftermath of the bombing: "How many people died or were injured by the atomic bombing?." These five topics were consistent with those from previous studies concerning this historical event by Fleming (1983), Henry (1996), Kazemek (1994), and Siler (1990). Students completed a data sheet (see appendix C) in which they classified similar and different treatments of the five topics between the textbooks in the two nations. After the activity, students discussed their findings freely.

Next, students discussed a hypothetical situation in which they imagined Hiroshima was their community and a Hiroshima scaled bomb had been dropped. Maps of Georgia and their county, based upon diagrams originated by Hood (1998), were provided for reference. Students also discussed what parts of their community would be destroyed and how many people would suffer if a 25-megaton bomb, the same scale as current nuclear weapons, were dropped. Students were surprised to learn how powerful the current new weapons are. They were also surprised to learn how much of their county would be destroyed if an atomic bomb was dropped there today. Many students described intensely sad feelings and almost all expressed that they would miss their families, friends, neighborhoods, and teachers due to the destruction of the atomic bomb and nuclear weapons.

Next, students engaged in a sustained group oral history interview experience with me, the Japanese graduate student, and the two American World War II veterans. The students interviewed them over a period of four class sessions. In order to avoid my influence on the American veterans' oral histories and students' reflections about the interviews, I did not observe, nor did I participate in the class sessions during which their

group oral history interviews were completed. Students took notes on their responses and discussed perceptions related to the questions. Some students asked additional questions, about topics such as contemporary Japanese language, culture, and economy. They asked an additional question to the American veterans about their worst battles during the war.

Students analyzed their interview data and reviewed their questionnaire sheets and notes. They wrote their findings and reflected on their understandings of the multiple perspectives represented by the interview data and supported by what they had learned.

At the completion of oral history activities, the teacher gave me copies of students' transcripts of oral history interviews and their work and reflections.

## Findings

### Analysis of Student Data Sheets

Students learned that the textbooks they were using gave scant attention to World War II events and found that the reference to the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in their textbook was shorter than that in a Japanese counterpart. Students' data sheets indicated that they discovered similar and different treatments of the historical event in the two nations' textbooks. In the creation of the atomic bomb, almost all students said that there was no information about who made the atomic bomb and about how the atomic bomb was tested in the two textbooks. However, some students already knew the names of scientists such as Einstein and Oppenheimer because they had previously learned about such scientists from family members or teachers.

In the treatment of America's motives and objectives in using the bomb, students found different treatments in the two textbooks. In the U.S. textbook, they found the description that the United States used the atomic bomb to force Japan to surrender. In the Japanese textbook, most of the students indicated that the United States dropped the atomic bomb because they wanted to be more powerful than the Soviet Union. One student interpreted the Japanese textbook to mean that "The Japanese government ignored the

[Potsdam] declaration and urged the Japanese people towards a fight to the finish." About 10% of the students were not able to identify the source of America's motives and objectives in using the atomic bomb in the Japanese textbook. They seemed to lack the interpretive and analytical skills necessary to complete a comparison.

In the treatment of the Soviet role in dropping the atomic bombing, all students stated that there was no information about the Soviet role in the U.S. textbook. In the Japanese textbook analysis, some students did not understand the nuances present to identify, while others were confused about the Soviet role and the U.S. role. The Japanese textbook stated that the Soviet Union abandoned its neutrality pact with Japan and declared war on Japan on August 8, one day before the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. No student indicated that the Soviet Union's role was one of the reasons why the United States dropped another atomic bomb on Nagasaki.

In comparing the treatment of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, students found another gap between the two nations' textbooks. All students responded similarly, that " [the] U.S. textbook ignores the bombing of Hiroshima, "we ignore it," and " [U. S. textbooks] don't think it is important." Students also responded similarly to the treatment of the dropping of the atomic bomb in the Japanese textbook. They said that the textbook "Go[es] into details, "makes you feel like it was horrible," "makes you feel bad," "they [Japanese] hated it," and "Japanese blames it on the U.S. for the bombing."

Finally, in the treatment of the aftermath of the bombing, students were surprised when they found in the Japanese textbook the number of persons who died from the bombing. The treatment of the number of dead was not found in the U.S. textbook. Two students' reflective journals indicated empathetic connections and new realizations.

> *i didn't know there [was] so many deaths and I feel very sad for all the civilians who died from the dropping of Atomic bomb.*

*I have been reading some of the Japanese textbook and American textbook. There was a humongous difference of the people killed by Atomic bombs in Japanese textbook and in America's textbook.*

After analyzing the treatments of the historical event in Japanese and U.S. textbooks, students learned that their U.S. textbook gave scant attention to World War II, and they discovered differences between the textbooks in the two nations. The following student responses indicate these students' initial attempts at perspective taking.

*I learned that the American textbooks and the Japanese textbooks teach very different things. In fact, the American textbooks didn't say hardly anything.*

*I learned that U.S. S.S. [social studies] books had less information than the Japanese SS books.*

Analysis of Oral History Activities

In week three of the unit the students interviewed me on day two for a Japanese perspective and two U.S. veterans on days three and four for an American perspective about World War II. The interviews took place in the classroom, and a group oral history technique and interview process was used. Students had previously generated a list of questions for each respondent. Students took turns asking their questions. Later, they also asked additional, and sometimes unrelated questions. After the interview, students were asked to write in their reflective journals. They wrote about their general thoughts and feelings and their own perspectives. Through the oral history activities, students learned first hand that the story of history is told in different ways, from different perspectives. Several students' reflective journals indicated a clear understanding of the causality of different perspectives.

*I think their [Japanese and American oral history narrators] were so different they are from two different countries.*

*I think their opinions were so different because they are from different cultures.*

*I think their opinions are so different because they were on different sides of the war.*

*I think their opinions were different because their government told them different things.*

*I think there [their] opinions were so different because 2 of them were American and one was Japanese and one of them were [was] actually in the war and the other aren't.*

Students' reflective journals indicated that four types of responses emerged from students' reflections. Fourteen students identified positively with the two American veterans. Three main reasons emerged from their responses: Japan's attacking Pearl Harbor, the atomic bombing saving human lives, and Japan's actions during the war.

*I agree with Mr. S and Mr. M [American veterans] because the Japanese started the war.*

*I agree most with Mr. S and Mr. M the most because I think the Japanese brought it on themselves.*

*I agree with Mr. M and Mr. S. They said they would more Japanese killed in W.W.II than in W.W.I [if the United States did not drop the atomic bombs]. They saved many Americans in World War II.*

*I think it was right to drop the atomic bomb because they [Japanese] punish[ed] us. They killed some of USA.*

Ten students identified positively with the Japanese oral history narrator. Two main reasons emerged from the data: the atomic bombs killing many innocent civilians and the Japanese government's attitude toward surrender.

*I agree with Mr. Ogawa because the a-bomb just killed way over to many civilians.*

*I think I agree with Mr. Ogawa because so many innocent people died from the bomb. And so many[much] stuff got destroyed.*

*I agree with Mr. Ogawa because the Japanese probably would have surrendered soon and there was really no need to drop it. The bomb killed thousands of innocent people. We were already winning anyway.*

*I think I would have to agree with Mr. Ogawa because the Japanese were losing territory and were about to surrender anyway.*

One student's comment was markedly different and indicates a lack of chronological knowledge.

*... I think the A-bomb was wrong. We should have dropped [the atomic bomb] on Germany. Germany were the most horrible people because they were nazis [Nazis].*

Two students embraced both perspectives. They understood the United States' motives and objectives in using the bombs; however, at the same time, they stated that the atomic bombs killed so many innocent people.

> *I agree with both really because I kind of agree with the U.S. because they shouldn't start it, but I agree with the Japanese because they [U.S.] killed so many people with the A-bomb.*

> *I agree with both because if we would not have bombed them they would have bombed us or killed more of our soldiers. But then, I don't agree with Mr. S and Mr. M. Because I do not take we should have killed so many innocent people. Because I know I would not want them to bomb me.*

Only one student mentioned different reflections.

> *I don't really agree with any of them because I don't know all the facts. I do agree with both of them on same [some] things but [not all] of them.*

The rest of the students (9) did not write anything about their perspectives. The majority of students' reflective journals indicated that their limited perspectives about World War II had broadened during the classroom oral history activities.

The second part of the students' reflections concerned what they had learned that they found surprising. Some students mentioned that the American veterans' response to the question (#11), "How do you think being in W.W.II changed your life?"

> *I was surprised when Mr. M said that going into W.W.II didn't change their lives any.*

> *I can't believe that being in the war didn't change Mr. S's life or Mr. M's life.*

> *I [was] surprised that they were not scared from [about] going into war. I know I would be [scared]*

Other students expressed their surprise about the veterans' opinions about the atomic bomb.

> *I was surprise [surprised] when the veterans said that there was no other way to end the war.*

> *[I was surprised] that they both thought it was right to drop the bomb on Japan.*

Some students mentioned the Japanese narrator's response to the questions and his differing perspective from those of the American veterans'.

*... the Japanese say we dropped the A-bomb only to come out of the war stronger than the Soviet Union.*

*I think that the only thing that surprised me was that Mr. Ogawa didn't blame anyone for dropping the bomb, but Mr. M and Mr. Scott both blamed the Japanese.*

*Some things that really surprised me were the difference between how many people died and their opinion about if it was right to drop the Atomic bomb.*

Only one student described of the role of his own family members, particularly his grandfathers who served in the war, as contributing to his perceptions of the war.

*I didn't know about those 5 brothers that were killed. Both of my grandfathers were in the war, so I heard many things. One of them in Europe and the other in the Pacific. Never have I heard the story.*

## Discussion

This study revealed that the majority of these sixth grade students were able to find different treatments of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in U.S. and Japanese textbooks. Next, the majority of students were able to determine that sufficient historical information is not prevalent in the textbooks. Most students' analysis of the U.S. textbook revealed that it paid little attention to the historical event of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and devoted little space to the bombing. Over 80% of students also found, as in previous studies which examined textbook treatment of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by Fleming (1983), Henry (1996), Kazemek (1994), and Siler (1990), that the perspectives in the U. S. textbook was superficial.

This study also found that students had the ability to analyze perspectives in the U.S. textbook that failed to capture the emotional intensity and gravity of the event and to give students alternative perspectives regarding the historical event. Like Barth's study (1995) that suggested teachers' reliance on the lecture-discussion-textbook approach to teaching World War II and the narrow perspective of such an approach, this study supports the effectiveness of the introduction of another country's textbook to discuss cross-national topics and to discover different perspectives. However, further research is needed to

determine if the introduction of another country's textbook is helpful in the development of students' historical thinking and how it affects the construction of multiple perspectives.

This study found that the introduction of oral history activities helped almost all students to develop their historical thinking, general analysis, and critical thinking skills. The oral history project seemed to enhance students' development of historical multiple perspectives. The facilitation of an international oral history interview provided an opportunity for students to understand different histories, culture, and people. As this study found, the introduction of oral history in history classrooms may be a significant strategy to develop students' historical thinking, allowing students to act as historians. Interviewing elders and people from other countries and cultures and analyzing the interview data provides a helpful environment for understanding historical events.

Many teachers might be afraid to engage in a study of controversial issues such as the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. However, studying and debating controversial issues like this historical event is a fertile opportunity to develop and deepen students' own values and moral convictions (Kirschenbaum, 1995). Further, it is an opportunity to develop critical thinking and citizenship skills, which are an important aspect in a democratic society (Kirschenbaum, 1995). As Appleby, Hunt, and Jacob (1994) said, educators in a democracy should help students learn "a very different history, a pluralist or perspectival history in which [they] participate in meaningful discussion with an ever growing chorus of voices" (Levstik, 1997).

## Limitations of the Study

This study is delimited by selecting only two grade 6 classes in Georgia as the sample population, the choice of middle school social studies classes as the subject area, the convenient selection of Japanese and American oral history narrators, and the fact that the American oral history narrators had participated in World War II and the Japanese oral history narrator had not. Additionally, the availability of participants for the oral history

interviews necessitated the group interview process rather than the more desirable individual oral history interview. Together, these factors limit this study's generalizability to students' historical thinking and perspective through the oral history interviews with people having different historical perspectives.

## Further Research

Further research is needed to examine the development of students' historical thinking and perspectives through interviews and observations; to examine how teachers perceive oral history activities; and to learn how they respond to the inclusion of people with different historical perspectives as oral history narrators. Additionally, further research is needed to examine how students talk about historical perspectives that their family or community members do not have with their family and community members.

## References


Appleby, J., Hunt, L., and Jacob, M. (1994). Telling the truth about the history. New York: Norton.

Banks, J., and Banks C. (Eds.). (1995). Handbook of research on multicultural education. New York: Macmillan.

Banks, J. A., Beyer, B. K., Contreras, G., Craven, J., Ladson-Billings, G., McFarland, M. A., and Parker, W. C. (1993). The world: past and present. New York: Macmillan/McGraw.

Barth, L. J. (1995). Commemorating the end of World War II: How World War II is taught in American classrooms. International Journal of Social Studies, 10 (1), 1-11.

Bennett, C. T., and Forney, L. (1997). Oral history: A bridge to thinking historically. Southern Social Studies Journal, 22(2), 11-25.

Bohan, C. H., and Davis, O. J. Jr. (1998). Historical construction: How social studies student teachers' historical thinking is reflected in their writing of history. Theory and Research in Social Education, 26 (2), 173-197.

Boyle-Baise, M. (1996). Multicultural social studies: Ideology and practice. Social Studies, 87 (2), 81-87.

Brophy, J., and VanSledright, B. (1997). Teaching and Learning History in Elementary Schools. New York: Teachers College Press.

CNN (1999). Stories of the century. http://www.cnn.com.

Cohen, P. (1995a). Challenging history: The past remains a battleground for schools. ASCD Curriculum Update. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Cohen, P. (1995b). Students as historians. ASCD Curriculum Update. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Crabtree, C., and Nash, G. (Eds.). (1994). National standards for U.S. history: Exploring the American experience. Los Angeles: National Center for History in the Schools.

Crabtree, C., and Nash, G. (Eds.). (1994). National Standards for World history: Exploring patterns to the present. Los Angeles: National Center for History in the Schools.

Crocco, M. S. (1998). Putting the actors back on stage: Oral history in the secondary school classroom. Social Studies, 89 (1), 19-24.

Downey, M. T., and Levstik, L. S. (1991). Teaching and learning history. In J. P. Shaver (Ed.), Handbook of research on social studies teaching and learning. New York: Macmillan.

Ellis, A. (1998). Teaching and learning: elementary social studies. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Epstein, T. L. (1994). The arts of history: An analysis of secondary school students' interpretations of the arts in historical contexts. Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 9 (2), 174-94.

Epstein, T. L. (1997). Sociocultural approaches to young people's historical understanding. Social Education, 61 (1), 28-31.

Field, L. S., Labbo, L. D., Wilhelm, R. W., and Garrett, A. W. (1996). To touch, to feel, to See: Artifacts in the elementary school classroom. Social Education, 60 (3), 141-43.

Fleming, D. B. (1983). Nuclear war in high school history textbooks. Phi Delta Kappan, 64 (3), 550-51.

Foster, S., Hoge, J. D., and Rosch, R. H. (1999). Thinking aloud about history: children's and adolescents' responses to historical photographs. Theory and Research in Social Education, 27 (2), 179-214.

Foster, S. J., and Morris, J. W. (1994). Arsenal of righenousness?-- Treatment of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in English and U.S. History textbooks. Curriculum, 15 (3), 163-172.

Gagnon, P. (1988). Why study history? The Atlantic Monthly, 262 (5), 43-66.

Goodlad, J. (1984). A place called school. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Henry, S. M. (1986). Where do we stand on the A-Bomb? OAH Magazine of History, 10 (3), 51-2

Hickey, M. G. (1991). "And then what happened grandpa?: Oral history projects in the elementary classroom. Social Education, 55(4), 216-17.

Hoge, J. D., and Crump, C. (1988). Teaching history in the elementary school. Bloomington, IN: The Social Studies Development Center.

Hood, E. (1998). How powerful is a nuclear bomb? In Tora no Maki III: Lessons for teaching about contemporary Japan. Washington D. C.: National Council for the Social Studies.

International Society for Educational Information, Inc. (1996). Japan in modern history: Junior high school. Tokyo: International Society for Educational Information Inc.

Johnson, J. H. (1988). Improving social studies instruction: Advice to the generalist in a special world. Clearing House, 62 (4), 152-54.

Jorgensen, K. L. (1993). History workshop: Reconstructing the past with elementary students. Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.

Kazemek, F. E. (1994). "Two Handful of Bones and Ash": Teaching Our Children about Hiroshima. Phi Delta Kappan, 75 (7), 531-34.

Kirschenmaum, H. (1995). 100 ways to enhance values and morality in schools and youth settings. Needham Heights, MA: Simon & Schster.

Klages, C. L. (1999). Secondary social studies' engagement with historical thinking and historical empathy as they use oral history interviews. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Texas at Austin.

Kobrin, D. (1996). Beyond the textbook: Teaching history using documents and primary sources. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Labbo, L. D., and Field, S. L. (1995). Once upon a time... During social studies. Journal of Social Studies Research, 19 (2), 28-34.

Levstik, L. S. (1986). The Relationship Between Historical Response and Narrative in a Sixth-Grade Classroom. Theory and Research in Social Education, 14 (1), 1-19.

Levstik, L. S. (1997). "Any history is someone's history": Listening to multiple voices from the past. Social Education, 61 (1), 48-51.

Levstik, L. S., and Barton, K. C. (1996). "They still use some of their past': historical salience in elementary children's chronological thinking. Curriculum Studies, 28 (5), 531-576.

Levstik, L. S., and Barton, K.C. (1997). Doing history: Investigating with children in elementary and middle schools. Malwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Lomas, T. (1990). Teaching and assessing historical understanding. London: The Historical Association.

Loewen, J. W. (1995). Lies my teacher told Me: Everything your American History textbook got wrong. New York: The New Press.

Martinello, M. L., and Cook, G. E. (1994). Interdisciplinary inquiry in teaching and learning. New York: Macmillan.

Michaelis, J. U., and Garcia, J. (1996). Social studies for children: A guide to basic instruction. Englewood, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Ogawa, M. (1998). A comparative study of the treatment of Japanese politics and political systems after World War II in Japanese and U.S. World History textbooks. Unpublished Master's Thesis. University of Georgia.

Olsen. N. W. (1987). Oral history: Leading the way to communication-based learning. In B. Hatcher(Ed.), Learning opportunities beyond the schools. Wheaton, MA: Association for Childhood Education International.

Ross, A. (1998). Children becoming historians: an oral history project in a primary school. In R. Perks and A. Thomson (Eds.). The oral history reader. London: Routledge.

Seixas, P. (1993). Historical understanding among adolescents in a multicultural setting. Curriculum Inequity, 23 (3), 301-327.

Seixas, P. (1994). Students' understanding of historical Ssignificance. Theory and Research in Social Education, 22(3), 281-304.

Siler, C. R. (1990). United States textbooks: Cloned mediocrity. International Journal of Social Studies, 4 (3), 10-31.

Sitton, T., Mehaffy, G. L. and Davis, O. L. Jr. (1983). Oral history: A guide for teachers (and others). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Smith, R. E., and Manly, S. A. (1994). Social studies learning activities packets. Social Studies, 85 (4), 160-164.

Steinberg, S. (1993). The world inside the classroom: Using oral history to explore racial and ethnic diversity. Social Studies, 84 (2), 71-73.

Style, E. (1988). Curriculum as window and mirror. In M. Crocco (Ed.). Listening for all voices: Gender balancing the school curriculum. Summit, NJ: Oak Knoll School.

Tiedt, P. L., and Tiedt, I. M. (1999). Multicultural teaching: A handbook of activities, information, and resources. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

VanSledright, B. A. (1995). I don't remember--The ideas are all jumbled in my head: 8th graders' reconstructions of colonial American history. Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 10, 317-345.

VanSledright, B. A., and Kelly, C. (1998). Reading American History: The influence of multiple sources on sixth graders. The Elementary School Journal, 98 (3), 239-265.

vonEschenbach, J. F., and Ragsdale, C. (1989). The integration of elementary social studies and mathematics through experimental learning, Social Studies, 80 (6), 225-228.

Wade, R. C. (1993). Content analysis of social studies textbooks: A review of ten years research. Theory and Research in Social Education, 21 (3), 232-56.

Wineburg, S. (1999). Historical thinking and other unnatural acts. Phi Delta Kappan, 80, 488-499.

Wolf, D. P., Balick, D., and Craven, J. (1997). Digging deep: Teaching social studies through the study of archaeology. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Appendix A: Questions for a Japanese Narrator

1. What made you interested in studying the dropping of the atomic bombs?
2. Do you think it was wrong of the United States to drop the Atomic bombs?
3. What do you think the United States could have done differently to end the war against Japan?
4. Were any of your relatives in World War II? What did they say about it?
5. What do you think about the Japanese interment camps that the United States used during World War II?
6. How do they teach about the dropping of the atomic bombs in Japanese schools?
7. What do the Japanese textbooks say about the bombing of Pearl Harbor?
8. Why was Japan taking over territory in China before World War II started?
9. Why did the Japanese soldiers commit suicide (Hara-kiri) rather than surrender? Do you think that was right?
10. What do you think about the use of Japanese teenagers for Kamikaze pilots?
11. Which textbooks have more of the truth in them, the Japanese or the American?
12. How do you think the world would be different today if the Japanese had won W.W.II?
13. Who do the Japanese people blame for dropping the atomic bombs on Japan?
14. What is the Japanese perspective of Americans today?
15. What do you think would happen if nuclear weapons were used today in a war?
16. What was in like in Hiroshima and Nagasaki after the atomic bombs were dropped?
17. How many people were killed by the atomic bombs, including people that died later from radiation and cancer?
18. Does Japan still believe that there is no honor in surrender?
19. Do you think that World War II accomplished anything?
20. Do you think we should have atomic weapons?
21. What were you taught about World War II when you were growing up?
22. Why did the Japanese hate the United States so much before World War II?

Appendix B: Questions for World War II Veterans

1. What do you think about the United States dropping the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki?
2. Do you think the United States could have ended the war a better way, without killing so many civilians?
3. What do you think about the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese?
4. Which part of the war did you fight in? Where were you stationed?
5. What do you think of the Japanese internment camps in the United States?
6. Who do you think is to blame for the atomic bombs being dropped?
7. Do you think that World War II accomplished anything?
8. Did you enlist in the service or were you drafted? How old were you?
9. Was W.W.II the only war you fought in?
10. What was the worst thing about being W.W.II?
11. How do you think being in W.W.II changed your life?
12. What was it like being in W.W.II?
13. What is your opinion of Hitler?
14. Do you still carry a grudge against the Japanese after fighting against them in W.W.II?
15. Do you ever feel guilty for being in the war or proud that you served your country?
16. What do you think would happen if we were ever involved in a Third World War?

(Additional Question). What was the worst battle you ever fought in?

Appendix C: Data Sheet

| | U.S. Textbook | Japanese Textbook |
|---|---|---|
| **Creation of the atomic bomb:**<br>Who made the atomic bomb?<br>How was the atomic bomb tested? | | |
| **America's motives and objectives in using the bomb:**<br>Why did the United States drop the atomic bomb? | | |
| **Soviet role:**<br>What was the Soviet role in dropping the atomic bomb? | | |
| **Dropping of atomic bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki:**<br>How do textbooks in the two countries treat the atomic bomb? | | |
| **Aftermath of the bombing:**<br>How many people died or were injured by the atomic bombing? | | |